Teen And Up Audiences

Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

M/M

My Inner Demons - Aphmau (Web Series)

Noi/Pierce (My Inner Demons)
Asch & Ava & Leif & Noi & Pierce & Rhys (My Inner Demons)

Pierce (My Inner Demons)
Noi (My Inner Demons)
Rhys (My Inner Demons)
Leif (My Inner Demons)
Asch (My Inner Demons)
Ava (My Inner Demons)

Sickfic
The Daemos Are Dumbasses
Vomiting
Fluff and Angst
Rhys Is So Done
Ava is So done
Fighting
Protective Pierce
sick cuddles
why is that not a tag?
Threats
Mentioned Mrs. Oates
like she shows up and that's it
The Group Cares For Noi
Possible medical inaccuracies
they aren't human anyway so biology weird
Nightmares
Love Confessions
First Kiss
First Relationship
Some Humor
First Dates
Kinda
Angst and Romance
Leif is an asshole for some reason

English

Don't Eat Glow Sticks Unless You Want Love

Hypnoi (orphan_account) , Mysticlae

Summary:

Rhys had stepped out for five minutes, just enough time for the Daemos to drink glow sticks. However, Noi gets very sick, very quickly. Pierce suddenly gets protective.

Noi/Pierce our beloveds.

Notes:

(See the end of the work for notes (#work_endnotes).)

"Be calm, Rhys. Just be calm. For us to have light we need dark, therefore we need dumb to have smart..... You can do this..." Rhys muttered as he rubbed the bridge of his nose.

The other four Daemos were not the brightest souls.

Well…mentally, they weren't bright, however their insides surely seemed to glow due to them cracking open some glow sticks and drinking the fluids from within. The few giggly seconds amongst themselves were pleasant before the liquid rushed back up their throats and caused them all to get sick.

Rhys was only gone for 5 minutes to take a call, just 5 minutes. Now, he was sitting on the couch attempting to hold back his frustration as he noticed the glowing orange solution that had now stained his robes.

Rhys grimaced in disgust, before sighing. "Princess Ava!" At the very least, Ava would help him scold the idiots he lived with. They always assumed Rhys was being overdramatic or a "buzzkill" as Leif mocked.

Rhys took off his robe, holding it as far away as he could. The thought of using his magic to clean his robe was starting to tempt him.

The sounds of sleepy shuffling could be heard behind Ava's bedroom door before it opened, revealing an exhausted Ava with a bad case of bed head. Her droopy eyes widened immediately at the sight of a shaking Noi with one hand holding onto his stomach and the other clinging onto the edge of the couch while glow stick liquid leaked from the corner of his mouth. "…Leif said…Leif said it would give us more magic," Noi murmured with a voice cracking worse than a broken radio.

A shout from the bathroom seemed to quickly follow Noi's words as Leif stumbled out the bathroom while pointing an accusatory finger at Noi and leaning against a wall to support himself. "You're lying, ya snitch!"

Ava had to fight every urge she had to not bang her head against the apartment's walls as she looked over at Rhys, who seemed to be doing the same to restrain himself. She walked over to the couch and spoke to Rhys in the sternest yet most gentle voice she could muster. "Rhys. What happened when I went to bed?" It was clear from the twitching of her eyes that she was the opposite of calm and collected.

Rhys sighed. "They.. They ate glow sticks. And Leif, I believe Noi over you."

Leif glared at Rhys and was about to say something before he abruptly gagged and ran back into the bathroom. "Move, Pier-" Rhys covered his ears as Leif retched.

Ava sighed, before grabbing water and a paper towel, leading Noi to the sink. "Let it out, you four!" she called. A paler than normal Asch came out to nod at her weakly.

"Y-Yes...." Pierce croaked out from the main bathroom.

After a few rather disgusting minutes, Ava flopped onto the couch to observe the scene around her. Luckily, the guys weren't stupid enough to make too much of a mess around the apartment and mostly kept it in the bathrooms.

Pierce was washing his face in the kitchen sink, Asch was leaning over a bowl of Crunchy Munchies on the kitchen counter, Noi was lying on the floor in a less than oriented manner, and Leif walked out of the bathroom as if everything was normal. The bastard had clearly healed himself on instinct and seemed much better than the other three accomplices, despite the fact that he was the one who not only came up with the idea, but also drank the most glow sticks before the worst came their way.

"Well, that was an adventure if I've ever seen one, right guys? And Asch was just complaining about being bored he-"

"Leif, I am going to murder you." Rhys gave Leif a deadly glare from the couch, causing Leif to freeze in his spot.

He quickly shut up after that.

Asch glared at Leif. "Heal us, you bastard!"

"No can do. Rhys said no magic."

"If I didn't feel like shit, I'd melt that smirk off your face myself!"

Noi mumbled something incoherent as Pierce sat down next to him on the wooden floor and began patting his head. Ava sighed, "I think you four gave me a migraine!" Rhys nodded in agreement.

"Well, what about Rhys?!" Leif asked. "He was supposed to watch over us."

Rhys froze. He couldn't let the fact slip out that he had stole Ava's phone for a moment to call someone. "I... was... looking for something to clean my glasses." Ava seemed to accept that, while Asch glared at Rhys. Rhys sent one back. Asch rolled his eyes and went back to his food.

"Leif, he said we can use magic for EMERGENCIES. I don't know if you're as blind as Rhys, but look at Noi and tell me he's doing okay," Asch scolded Leif while pointing at Noi, who was somewhere between giggling to himself and crying, putting on a slightly concerning display.

"You're really going to tell me that you care about his ass now? You were perfectly fine with Johnny almost killing him on the first day here," Leif defended while giving Asch a condescending smirk that only grew as Asch turned away and continued to stuff his face with soggy cereal, ignoring Leif's statement.

"Enough. You two, stop bickering. Noi, you'll be fine. And everyone, please. Shut. The hell. Up." Rhys was on his last nerve as he rubbed his temples while sitting on the couch. Ava quietly obtained Rhys's now stained robe from beside him and took it to the laundry room to wash. She sat herself back down and put a hand on his shoulder before mouthing a 'thank you'. Rhys put his hand over her's and gave her a small smile in return.

Pierce looked down at Noi, petting his head some more. He looked up at Asch, as if to say, "Make Leif do something", but Asch was too busy eating to pay attention to him.

Leif sat down on the couch, stretching contently. Rhys sighed. "Leif, please go help Noi."

"I thought you said no magic."

Rhys was about to strangle Leif if Ava hadn't stopped him by gently squeezing his shoulder. Pierce picked up Noi from the floor and observed him. "I think we need to get help. Noi's condition is less than.." Pierce thought, as if trying to find the word.

Noi placed his head in the crook of Pierce's shoulder while he let out a quiet laugh before turning to Rhys. "Wait a sec..y-you weren't cleaning your glasses? Cus I heard you talkin' outside," Noi stated with a lopsided smile.

Rhys froze in place while his breath hitched, an odd thing for him to do in the eyes of the others. "Uhhh, what?" Leif was now suddenly interested in what Noi was saying.

"He's probably imagining things," Ava dismissed. Rhys nodded while he visibly shot up.

"Yeah, exactly. He clearly needs you to heal him, Leif."

"But you said-"

"Leif. Heal him before you're going to need to heal yourself again," Rhys demanded with a suddenly cold tone, throwing almost everyone off.

Pierce quietly shushed Noi before glaring at Leif. Noi released a quiet sob again, causing everyone but him and Leif to tense up. "Shhhh..." Pierce whispered.

"Leif. That is no longer a request but an order," Asch growled.

Leif ignored Asch and spoke to Pierce. "Why are YOU so angry over this? Is it really that big of a deal or are you getting soft?"

"Just cleaning up after your mess as usual, Leif," Pierce growled before turning his attention back to Noi, his gaze immediately softening.

Leif's eyes were wide open as he walked closer to Pierce. "Repeat that, general?"

Pierce whipped his head around to Leif with a look that could murder. The look that gave off the longing to murder. "I said I'm cleaning up the mess you made as usual. You clearly were never taught to take ownership by the parents you didn't possess." Pierce's tone was chilling, but not as much as his words that made the tension in the room thicker than blood.

Rhys was glad that the attention was off of him and his outburst after Noi almost outed his secret communications with Ava's stolen phone, but the two guys seemed to be escalating the situation far beyond what was necessary.

Leif smirked. "Oooohh~ Look at Pierce defending the weakling~"

Pierce glared even harder. "I see they never taught you manners, either."

"I'm an assassin, O Great General, we don-"

"Wrong. You're a knight now."

Noi let out another sob, as he clung onto Pierce. "Hurts.... a lot....."

Rhys stood up, walking over to Noi. Even Asch was beginning to look concerned. "Noi... Can you hear me?"

Noi winced at the question, weakly covering his ears with shaky hands and staring with glassy eyes. "You're too loud…"

Pierce held Noi tighter while looking over at Ava. "Princess Ava, may I lay Noi down in your bed?" Pierce asked with an unnatural sense of gentleness and caution.

Ava nodded her head, also worried about his condition while she remained on the couch. Pierce bowed his head a slight bit before facing Leif once more. “We will talk when I’m back,” Pierce scowled through gritted teeth before leading Noi to Ava’s room.

Leif had a tauntingly smug look on his face as he watched the two men enter Ava’s room, clearly not looking to back down or even show concern for the weaker Daemos.

Noi curled up almost instantly in the sheets, tears running down his face. Pierce gave Noi some small headpats while using his other hand to wipe away some of the tears. "It hurts…" Noi whispered. Pierce nodded, before gently squeezing Noi's hand. "Please…Pierce. Don-Don’t le...leave." Noi choked out.

Pierce could hear loud yells from Asch back in the living room. Noi heard too, because he let out another sob and covered his ears. Pierce could feel an emotion he hadn't felt for years building up. Panic. He didn't know what to do and he was utterly helpless. Only way to help him would be Leif, that bastard. Oh, how Pierce wanted to punch him so bad his healing magic would never fix his face. Why did he trick Noi into drinking the most?!

In an act of desperation and urgency, Pierce threw himself onto the bed and pulled Noi into his chest, holding him while running his hands through his salmon hair. He shushed and hummed while keeping Noi in his grasp in an attempt to calm him down. If this didn’t work, he would grab his long sword and hold it against Leif’s neck until Noi was healed, he had never felt so heated before.

A near silent chuckle snapped Pierce out of his thoughts as he looked down to see a slightly calmer Noi looking up at him. “You..you’re too nice to me. I…thank you for this.” Noi’s voice was trembling and meek, but also genuine.

Pierce hugged Noi tighter. Please, please Noi. Please. Please be okay. Noi let out another cry in pain, as his eyes kept glassing over.

"You are a selfish..... Only thinking....!" Pierce heard Asch yelling reverberate around the apartment, even through closed doors. He gently covered Noi's ears. Noi had begun shaking.

"Shit."

"I…Is the room always this… fuzzy? Is this what Rhys sees?!" Noi laughed, back to being loopy. Pierce's eyes widened.

"Noi. I... I have to leave. Just for a bit." Noi wiped away some tears before nodding. As soon as Pierce released him from his grip, Noi fell over, hitting the pillows. This was bad. "LEIF!"

Pierce slammed the door behind him as he left Ava’s room. Leif was facing the other direction when Pierce grabbed his sword and held it at his neck, giving Leif a serious look as he turned around. Leif noticeably lost a lot of his boldness and a bit of color on his face as the sight of the blade while everyone else in the room backed away from the scene. He put his hands up in a defensive motion while shrugging. “Fine, fine, whatever. I’ll heal him, just put your weapon down.”

“No.”

“Uhh, Pardon?”

“You heard me. When you finish healing Noi, then maybe I’ll put it down.”

Leif’s tongue pressed against his cheek as he reluctantly entered Ava’s room with Pierce following right behind, still armed and ready to strike if he needed to.

Rhys and Asch shared one look, before following after them. Pierce was so enraged he might still hurt Leif, no matter what happened. And Leif was a skilled assassin. Who knew what Leif may try?

Ava followed suit, watching intently. Pierce shoved Leif towards Noi, rougher than he'd ever pushed them. It caught Leif off-balance and he stumbled a bit, before righting himself and swearing under his breath. "Heal. Him."

Noi opened his eyes at Pierce's voice. "Pierce..... you're back....." He tried to reach out, but his arm fell back onto the bed. Ava gasped and Asch winced. The other three remained solemn.

"Yes, Noi." Pierce said, trying to keep the anger out of his voice. And the panic. "Leif. Heal him. "

Leif attempted to hide his shaky hands as he placed one on Noi's chest and the other on his head. Noi took in a slightly sharp inhale at Leif's cold hands, the sudden noise making Pierce clutch his sword tighter. Leif's hands turned a bright green as he worked his magic, literally. Only, it didn't seem to do much, at least not visually. Noi was still horribly pale and dazed as he laid on the bed.

Leif removed his hands and slowly turned to Pierce, his face now painted in fear. "My healing isn't working," Leif stated with a slight shake in his voice. He quickly took a step back before trying to explain. "I actually tried, I'm not kidding, I swear on the gods. It happened when Ava got sick too, my healing didn't work."

"Maybe it's because the bacteria were only native to Earth, so you don't know how to remove them?" Rhys spoke up.

Leif looked back at Noi and stuttered out a response. "I-I don't know. Princess Ava, what can we do?"

Ava froze as the attention was now on her and her lack of knowledge about healing, considering she hardly knew how to even care for herself when she got sick and relied on Ms. Oates. Not to mention, they couldn't bring Noi to the hospital or a doctor since Daemos and human biology were two different things and they might end up in Area 51 or something. "Umm, I'm not exactly sure. Maybe we can just wait it out?"

Noi let out a small pained sob mixed in with a gasp. "I.... I…..can't.."

Rhys stepped forward, making sure to place his own cold hands on Noi's face. He felt hot. Though, all of them felt hot to his cold hands. But Noi felt *unusually* hot. "Don't stress yourself, Noi." He turned to Ava. "Princess Ava, would you get the wise sage Ms. Oates? If she can fix my vision, she can fix Noi."

Ava didn't have the heart to tell any of them they could be wrong. It was an act of desperation but who knows, maybe it would work. "Okay, be right back!" she yelled, running out.

"Prince Asch, does Noi feel warm to you?" If Noi felt warm to Asch, then things would be bad. Asch came forward, resting his hand on Noi's forehead before his charcoal eyes widened. That was all Rhys needed. "He's-"

"He's burning!" Asch cried. Leif backed up, as if now understanding what he'd caused.

Noi mumbled something inaudible. He was barely coherent at this point. Leif stepped forward to try again, only to be blocked by a sword.

"You. Stay. Back," Pierce spat angrily.

"Pierce, as angry as you are, you have to put your sword down. If Ms. Oates saw this…it wouldn't be good for us or for Noi," Rhys stated in a semi-calm tone.

Pierce looked between him and Noi, whose eyes were not even half-lidded and seemed to be generally unwell, clearly needing all the help he could get. Pierce's eyes then switched over to Leif as he lowered his sword but gave a look that said "we aren't done yet." Leif took in a sigh of slight relief before Ava came rushing back in with Ms. Oates trailing behind, while Pierce came forward to hide Noi's horns.

All of the guys gave her a bow while Noi barely waved his hand at her from the bed. Ms. Oats gave a look of sympathy as she approached the bed and rested her hand on Noi's forehead, feeling the heat radiating off his skin. After a

few minutes, she turned her head to the others behind her and gave a gentle smile. “He’s going to be just fine. It’s just like when Ava got sick, nothing too serious.”

They all seemed to visibly relax after that statement. Pierce was still very tense as his eyes never left Noi. He was glad that Noi was going to be okay, but he wished he wasn’t sick in the first place. He was going to murder Leif when this passed over. He and the others listened as Ms. Oates described how to help him, even if it wasn’t much. When she finished, the guys all gave a bow of thankfulness while Ava watched them in slight confusion before thanking the older woman herself.

Once she left the apartment, Ava turned to Leif with her brow furrowed. “You’re lucky it’s not that serious, if it was, we wouldn’t be able to do anything,” she scoffed at him.

Ava took off to the kitchen to get a wet paper towel, followed by Asch and Rhys, leaving Pierce and Leif alone with Noi in Ava’s room.

Pierce almost felt like laughing in relief. "You hear that, Noi?" Asch asked, his tone sill harsh, but with a weird level of kindness to it. "You're going to be okay." He turned to Ava. "Prisoner! Tell us how high his temperature is!"

Ava rolled her eyes as she placed the water paper towel on Noi's forehead, who flinched and let out a whimper. "Rhys, hold this here. I'll fetch the thermometer." Rhys nodded and sat down on the bed, holding the towel to Noi's forehead.

Noi mumbled something still incoherent as Rhys gently rubbed his back. Most of them seemed to enjoy that, he never knew why. Noi closed his eyes a bit, as Pierce knelt down to the bed to keep wiping away tears. Unseen by the others, Noi gave Pierce a small smile, which Pierce returned. Noi's eyes widened and he laughed. No one took any mind of this anymore, assuming it was him being sick. Though Noi felt slightly better, and safe.

"Prisoner!" Asch called.

“I’m coming, idiot! And for the love of god, stop yelling!” Ava ironically shouted back as she returned to the room with a thermometer.

She placed it near Noi’s forehead and saw he was at 102.5 degrees, clearly a harsh fever, but nothing too dangerous. Ava sighed as she turned to the guys. “I think he needs space for now,” she stated with a sigh. She started putting on a jacket over her pajamas to look a bit more presentable.

“I’m going to head to the pharmacy to get some medicine for Noi, don’t do anything stupid when I’m gone.”

The guys all gave her a nod and a wave as she left, causing everyone else to pour out from Ava’s room. Everyone except for Pierce, who was sitting on the edge of the bed. He stared at the wall slightly lost in thought before he felt a hand touch his own. He turned over to look at Noi, who was weakly holding his hand.

Pierce gave Noi a faint smile, before squeezing his hand. God, how we wanted to shelter Noi from Leif, from this illness, from those stupid glow sticks. But there was nothing he could do but stay there.

"Pierce? Why..... are you being..... k-kind.... to me?" Noi tried to get closer to Pierce, as if scared Pierce would recoil in disgust.

Pierce looked at Noi before looking away to collect his thoughts. "I do not wish to see you get worse." A small voice in his head longed to say more, but Pierce quickly shushed it.

"Mm... Okay...." Noi mumbled. "Pierce? Do you... you think Princess Ava will.... will get me more pizza?" Noi asked, his tears beginning to stop. He looked hopeful. That was good. That wasn't being loopy or misery or pain.

"I will request that," Pierce said. "But she's getting you medicine at the far-mace-ee."

"Mace....? Does cutting someone... open and beating up.... the... the sick actually work?" Noi giggled. Pierce repressed a laugh.

"I do not think that is the meaning of the word here on E-uarth. We have learned that many times."

Noi laughed again, bringing another soft smile to Pierce's face. Noi may have been going back to loopy, but it was better than him crying. Maybe it was fear. The knowledge of not knowing what was happening to him. Maybe the pain had vanished after all when Leif had healed him. Or maybe the pain had subsided on its own. He did not know. But it didn't truly matter. Noi wasn't in serious pain, if any. That was important. He was healing already.

Noi's head lolled to the side while he started mumbling. "…I 'ont wanna go back to Demoos.. I wanna stay here forever."

Pierce's near straight face displayed a look of sight sadness as he nodded to what Noi had said. "Yes. Me too," Pierce replied.

"…I would miss you though."

Noi's short comment stunned Pierce for a moment. Noi would miss him? That wasn't something that he was expecting Noi to say. A part of Pierce's mind went to the fact that Noi was just too sick to make any sense, ~~but another part of him wanted it to be true. Why he would, he didn't know.~~ "Would you really miss me?"

"…Mmhm."

"Why?"

"Because you're nice to me. And you're pretty," Noi's eyes were unfocused and a bit glazed over, but his words still carried an air of genuineness that made Pierce's face a bit more red than before.

Pierce looked away but Noi kept speaking. "An... And strong and... and smart..." Noi's voice trailed off as he coughed.

Pierce ignored how hot his face felt. Perhaps Noi was mistaking him for Princess Ava at the moment. That was possible. His heart ached at that thought, no matter how much his brain kept repeating that.

"You protect me and you.... you're not... not annoyed at it.…" Noi giggled, "You hel-... held your sword t... to Leif's n..neck." Nope, Noi knew who he was speaking to. "An-anyone else w-would've b... been mad.... at the fact that I coul-couldn't do it myself..." Noi tugged a little at Pierce's hand. "So... I would m.. miss you. Pierce, I l-" Noi was caught off by another coughing fit.

"Noi. You're tired and need rest." Pierce's mind was both exploding and not wanting to believe it. He didn't know how to answer.

"I...wish... we could stay here t-together..... Asch.... Prince Asch would pr-probably let me.... let me go but... but not you... You're special...."

"I assure you, you are too," Pierce said. He took a deep breath. "To me, at least."

Noi's glazed eyes crinkled up as he smiled. "Next to me.... come... here..." Noi tugged at Pierce's hand again. Pierce smiled and laid down, as Noi snuggled up to him.

Noi's body was way warmer than what Pierce assumed it would be, but he didn't mind it. His arms found their way to holding Noi close while patting the back of his head. It was as if he'd done this before and yet he had no experience prior to today. Noi's limp arms also crossed over Pierce's body, albeit not holding him as tightly as Pierce's. Noi rested his head on Pierce's chest as his eyes shut themselves and his raspy breath deepened. "…You're not…gonna leave me, right?"

“Of course not. I’m staying right here, with you,” Pierce softly responded.

Noi let out a quiet laugh and something adjacent to a “yay” before going quiet. Pierce accepted the silence and remained lying on the bed beside him, allowing himself to relax as well. Despite trying to relax, the sound of his heart rapidly beating within his chest was quite distracting. Pierce closed his own eyes in hopes that he could also catch some rest beside Noi.

Noi smiled happily at Pierce. He shut his eyes and buried his face into Pierce's chest, silently hoping that Pierce wouldn't get sick as a result.

Rhys peeked in, trying to find Pierce. When he saw the two cuddled up, he gently smiled and shut the door while looking over at the other guys in the apartment. "Sh. Noi's resting."

Asch glared at Leif. "Then we take this to the castle, I see." He turned back to Rhys, in a less harsh tone. "Where is Pierce?"

"Comforting Noi, Your Highness. We do not want his condition to worsen." Rhys was certain something else had passed but did not want to make a wrong assumption. Pierce or Noi would likely tell them.

Asch just nodded. "Agreed."

I must be dreaming. Rhys smiled at this. It wasn't anything big, nor important. But the rare occurrence of Pierce being somewhat affectionate behind his serious facade was still reason enough to be slightly happy. "I will watch for Princess Ava's return."

Noi wasn’t exactly sure where he was. However, it was very recognizable. The purple colored wood with deep blue leaves spouted above him, the dark sky that dressed the atmosphere in near black, the horrid smell of decay.

His feet were suddenly running and his eyes were blurry, spilling tears faster than a river. His breathing was uneven and shallow and every part of him was full of exhaustion and fear. He knew he was running from something, he just didn’t know what that something was. To be honest, he didn’t care about what it was either, he just wanted to get away from it.

He needed help but knew none would come. That didn’t stop him from yelling for help. Noi couldn’t tell if he was shouting or not, but his throat burned like hellfire and yet no noise left from him other than the sound of his feet crunching the leaves below him. He was scared, he wanted to leave.

Pierce had actually managed to doze off for a few minutes until anxiety-filled mumbling sounded next to him, causing his eyes to open and his body to turn over.

Pierce shook Noi awake as gently as he could. Noi shot up, his eyes clear, yet his cheeks still flushed. "Noi? Are you alright?"

"I.... s-something wa...was chasing me and th.....there was no help and...." Noi grabbed his extremely sore throat. Pierce pulled Noi in for a hug. "I need water..." Noi rasped out.

"Yes." Pierce let go as Noi laid back down on the bed. Pierce stood up and exited, seeing Rhys outside the door.

"My apologies, Pierce, but I heard-"

"He's fine. Nightmare. He needs water though."

Rhys nodded, before striding off to the kitchen and grabbing a glass. He moved over to the sink and quietly filled it before passing it back to Pierce. "Thank you." Rhys nodded in response.

Pierce returned to the room. Noi laid there, trying not to cry out of panic. "Here." Noi forced himself up, and grabbed the glass, almost draining it.

"Stay here..." he mumbled, grabbing Pierce's hand. "Please?"

Pierce sat back down, pulling Noi into a tight hug and petting his head. Pierce felt Noi shake, and salt water seep through his shirt. "Shh. It will be okay."

"Pierce...? I-I think you guys were dead..... B-because I kn-knew I'd have n-n-no help..." Noi sobbed out.

Pierce paused, taking in the weight of those words. "Noi. That was just a nightm-"

"I know it was, okay?!"

“I-I know it was just a nightmare but you weren’t there!! You were gone! D-dead! How am I supposed to be okay with that?!” Noi lashed out off Pierce’s embrace, leaving Pierce with wide eyes.

“Noi, I’m sorry I wasn’t there, but you’re safe-“ Pierce cut himself off as he watched Noi shakily get up from the bed and lean against the wall.

“Noi? Where are you going?” Pierce questioned as he got up from the bed himself.

“I…Bathroom.” Noi held his own throat as he spoke and looked up at Pierce with bloodshot eyes.

Pierce reached out to support Noi, only to be pushed back by him with what little strength he had. This concerned Pierce horribly, he wasn’t ready to start getting up and walking around, not even with help. “Don’t touch me,” Noi staggered out as he faltered out the room, holding onto the wall for dear life while Pierce followed closely behind.

"Noi. You can barely walk witho-"

"I know, Pierce! Just because I'm weak doesn't mean I'm stupid!" Noi snapped.

"I did not say that."

Noi just rolled his eyes as he tried to shut the door behind him. Pierce caught it and continued to walk in. "Noi. Please, I understand you’re still on alert but you’re safe now.”

Noi just waved him off and shakily got off the wall. He nearly fell, if it weren't for Pierce catching him.

Noi avoided looking at Pierce as he sank onto the bathroom tile floor and rested his head on the closed toilet lid with his arms crossed. His body was visibly shaking from crying and weakness. Pierce lowered himself to his level and gently started rubbing his back. “Are you angry with me?” Pierce asked with concern laced in his voice.

Noi shook his head without lifting it too much. “Do you still feel scared?”

Noi stood still for a moment before his head nodded. Pierce wrapped his arms around Noi from behind in an attempt to calm him down. “You know I’m here now, right? And I’m not leaving. You can’t get rid of me, not now,” Pierce wasn’t much to try and add humor to a hard conversation by any means, but he wanted to put Noi at ease in any way he possibly could.

Noi's hands touched Pierce's in a way to show he knew he was there. His head fell back onto Pierce's body as he looked up at him. "Thank you," Noi whispered while his tears slowly stopped falling, not having any more to cry out.

Noi shook some more, feeling a weird tingly feeling in his stomach, neck, and mouth. He felt the breakfast Rhys had made force its way up and he gagged, opening the lid and putting his head back over the toilet. Pierce backed up, petting his head.

Pierce sighed as Noi gagged again, before vomiting. "I will return." Pierce stood back up and went back into Ava's bedroom, grabbing the water Rhys had gotten.

He reentered and passed the water to Noi, who drank it. "Let's return to the bedroom, if you no longer need to-"

"No, I don't..." Noi sighed. This time, he allowed Pierce to help him walk back over to the bed. Pierce gently laid him back down.

Where was Ava? Pierce wanted Noi healed. Now. God, he sounded like Asch. Pierce laid down himself and hugged Noi again, making sure Noi felt safe.

Noi let out a sigh as his body fell onto the cushions of the bed. It didn't take long for him to settle back down. Pierce's head lifted as he heard the front door open with a familiar feminine voice ringing out from the entrance. "Hey, I'm back! I got some medicine for Noi," Ava announced to the apartment.

It was about time Pierce thought to himself with snark spiked in. He held his thoughts back as he slowly got up from the bed and peeked out the door to gesture Ava into her room. Ava made her way in and laid the bag of things from the pharmacy on the bedside table. "May I ask why it took you so long?" Pierce couldn't disguise his slight anger as well as he thought.

She turned to him with an apologetic face. "The pharmacy was far and I needed to pull money from the bank, sorry," Ava explained.

Pierce realized how insensitive he was being and shook his head. "No, don't be sorry. Thank you for getting the medicine," Pierce quickly responded.

Ava seemed to relax at his gratitude as she pulled out some weird purple box from the bag. Definitely not a healing potion if Pierce had ever seen one.

"Princess Ava, what is that?" Pierce asked.

As if summoned by the words spoken, Rhys entered the room. "That is not a healing potion. That looks like the poison on Daemos."

Ava sighed. "It's human medicine. It's not a potion." She opened it and looked at Noi's cup. "Pierce, Rhys. One of you go fill that. Quickly."

Rhys wasted no time in grabbing the cup and striding out. Ava poured the medicine into her hand, before putting some back in. "Noi. This is a pill. You're gonna put it on the back of your tongue, get water, and swallow."

"Swallow? Excuse me?" Leif asked from the doorway, with a raised eyebrow. Pierce shot him a glare.

Asch appeared behind Leif, shoving him out of the way. "I was NOT done with you!"

"Oh, whatever. Noi's being healed. My mistake is fixed."

Ava sighed as Rhys reentered. "Boys. It won't be instant. It'll take time. Like me with my illness. Remember?"

"You did take time, but Noi is a Daemos. He should heal faster," Rhys informed.

"Yes, but he has a HUMAN illness. Therefore-"

"It will affect him differently." Pierce stroked Noi's hair gently.

Rhys nodded with some understanding before handing Noi the cup of water and Ava gave him the “pill”. He quickly brought both to his mouth and swallowed before letting out a “bleh” sound, not accustomed to the feeling of swallowing it. Afterwards, Noi turned himself to face Ava. “Princess Ava, am I going to die? I don’t wanna die here…” Noi asked with a wild and terrified look in his eyes.

She quickly shook her head no and reassured Noi. “Nonono, nobody is dying-“

“Not yet,” Asch interrupted as he glared at Leif from the corner of his eye.

Leif looked back at him with raised eyebrows and his mouth slightly agape. “The issue is being fixed, why are you still so upset?”

“Oh, WHY am I so upset?!” Asch shouted with a vein popping from his neck, having dealt with Leif for long enough that day. First it was him convincing everyone to drink the glow sticks, then he was the one that refused to heal Noi. Even if he couldn’t, he should have gone up and tried anyways without someone needing to hold a blade to his neck.

Before he could yell any more, Ava shushed him from inside the room. “I said no more yelling! Noi needs to relax and he can’t do that if you’re screaming at Leif so shut it.”

Asch scoffed in response before dragging Leif by the arm into the pocket dimension to continue his angry ranting.

Noi smiled at being told he wouldn't die. He was fine, he'd BE fine, rather. Pierce smiled and patted Noi's head. Rhys nodded happily too, before needing to adjust his glasses.

"Do I hafta take more pills...?" Noi asked.

"You might have to later... Sorry, Noi." Ava winced. Noi huffed and fell back onto Pierce, who let out a cough/grunt of surprise.

"Anyway, Noi, can you go back to your room? SOME Daemos woke me up!"

"I apologize, Princess Av-"

"Not you, Rhys. You had reason." Ava held up a hand to keep Rhys from talking. "Anyway, Pierce, take Noi back to his room."

"Yes." Pierce effortlessly lifted Noi, and Rhys grabbed the water for him. Noi snuggled into Pierce's chest, making Ava giggle and Rhys smile.

Pierce walked to Noi’s room with him in his arms. It was the smallest one in the castle, but it was still very big for a bedroom. There was a noticeable amount of training gear thrown around the room with reckless abandon. Noi clearly wasn’t much of a cleaner, but he did seem to train more often than the other guys would assume.

Pierce gently placed Noi on his bed and laid next to him before putting the covers over him. He felt a light tap on his shoulder from the smaller Daemos and let out a questioning “hm?”.

Noi released an exhausted and anxious sigh before hesitantly asking “Why did you even try in the first place?”

This question made Pierce raise an eyebrow and adjust himself to nearly sitting up. “What do you mean?” He asked curiously.

“Well, when I first joined the knights, I was horrible. Not that I’m not anymo-“

“Noi. Don’t start speaking badly of yourself. You’re getting off topic.”

“Right, uh, sorry. Anyways, I couldn’t fight for my life. Rhys had tried to show me how to fight with magic and gave up in a week. Leif also gave up on teaching me healing not too long after. So why did you stay?” Noi seemed to be avoiding looking at Pierce while he asked his question, his hands fidgeting on their own.

Pierce sighed and sat there, not truly knowing the answer. "Because I do not believe your worth is measured in how you fight." Pierce didn't know what else to say, as Noi took the words in.

"But... I hold the team back..." Noi whispered.

Pierce smiled gently, "And who has not at some point?"

"Rhys. Asch. Leif. You."

Pierce shook his head. "Do you remember when we had to cross that gap? The one from the faulty bridge?"

Noi nodded. "Yeah, bruised my knee jumping over and I nearly sprained my ankle...."

"How did Rhys react?"

Noi's eyes widened and he giggled a bit. "H-He refused to jump over. E-even though he'd s-seen us all do it!" Noi gave out a small laugh. Pierce nodded.

"Yes. I doubt Rhys was useful then."

"But what about the others?" Noi asked, pulling Pierce back down.

Pierce thought for a moment. "How useful was Asch that one time he got ill and refused to rest?"

"Ohhhhhh." Noi giggled again. "His magic, um, wouldn't even WORK properly!"

Pierce nodded. "That time Leif got captured by another kingdom..?"

Noi covered his mouth as he laughed. "But he escaped two d-days later..."

Pierce shrugged. "Was he useful to us during those two days?"

Noi shook his head. "Well, what about you?"

Pierce put his arm around Noi. "I have frozen in battle many times."

"Frozen?"

"Yes. Remember that time I broke both horns?"

"Yeah... Oh! Were you-"

Pierce nodded and pulled Noi closer. "We are weak at some point. You'll find your strong moment."

Noi smiled at Pierce, fighting back tears of happiness. For once, he didn't feel bad. Well, he did, he was still sick as all Hell. But he didn't feel bad about himself. He cuddled up to Pierce happily. "You think so?"

"Yes." Pierce's hand found its way to Noi's head, and Noi sighed contently. Pierce and Noi had some eye contact, before Noi hugged himself closer to Pierce.

Noi seemed to fall into place when Pierce hugged him, seeming to find a sense of belonging within his embrace. The world seemed softer and warmer in a way for him, whether or not it was because he was sick or because of Pierce was up for debate. Maybe it could be both.

Noi's eyelids draped over his eyes while he adjusted himself on the bed, a few coughs making his chest and throat ache a slight bit. He didn't seem to mind as much as he continued to get comfortable. "Hey…" Noi mumbled, though it wasn't clear if he was intentionally stating his thoughts to Pierce.

"I love you, I think…" Noi laughed at the end of his sentence before it faded off into silence.

Pierce froze. "You... You love me?" His cheeks felt warmer than he'd ever felt them be as Noi's eyes widened.

"I…" Noi buried his blushing face into Pierce's chest. "Y-yeah... I-I do..." Noi mentally prepared for Pierce to leave, to not ever want to be alone with him, to be disgusted, to-

Pierce gently grabbed Noi's head and lifted it back up, before sitting them both up. He couldn't believe this. This better not be those dreams he always woke up from.

Noi looked at Pierce, slightly confused before Pierce leaned in and kissed him. It was gentle, soft and Noi kissed back. Was this how either of them imagined it? No, not at all. But the kiss was all they needed then.

Pierce pulled away first, as Noi's eyes misted over. Pierce at least liked him, Pierce liked him! Noi pulled himself into Pierce's chest, tears threatened to spill from his eyes again.

Noi had imagined this moment about a hundred times over. He imagined his first confession would maybe be during a royal ball, or training, or even the time they were in the middle of battle. But he never imagined it would be like this, with him sick in bed because he drank the liquid out of a damn glowstick. And yet, he wouldn't want it any other way.

Noi continued to hide in Pierce's chest for a little while, eventually pulling back while Pierce rubbed his thumb along his cheek. Pierce's touch made Noi's stomach flip like crazy. "I'll be really upset if I get you sick," Noi jokingly muttered out.

Pierce gave Noi a gentle smile while shaking his head. "I'm okay, Noi."

"Okay…good. That's..that's good."

Noi's head fell back onto the pillow and Pierce quickly followed his movements. Noi's hand led itself to Pierce's and their fingers intertwined while their eyes were locked on each others, both of their faces a slight pink.

Noi smiled, way too giddy despite his exhaustion from the illness and nightmare. Pierce gave him one back. One much wider than normal.

Pierce would be lying if he said that he had never thought of that moment. After the perfect moment. After battle, a time in training where Asch would leave and they'd be alone, maybe after Ava took them somewhere even. But this worked for him too, he held Noi's hand. Yes, this worked just fine.

Noi continued smiling at Pierce with near-endless euphoria in his eyes before his smile quickly dropped as reality settled into place. They had just kissed. Noi and Pierce had just kissed. Noi shot up from the bed and covered his face with his hands. "BYTHEGODSWHATISHAPPENINGTODAY?!?"

So many things started buzzing in Noi's slightly foggy head. Pierce also stood up and tried to gently push Noi back down. "Hey, it's okay, I know this is a lot b-" Before Pierce could finish his sentence, Noi grabbed him by his collar and pulled him in.

"DO WE HAVE TO GET MARRIED NOW?!?!"

"Noi, *WHAT*!?!"

"PIERCE I AM NOT READY FOR MARRIAGE!"

"Duly noted!!!"

A light knock sounded at the door as a quite confused Asch walked in with a bowl of soup. "Uhh, Rhys told me to give this to Noi," Asch stated while looking between the two boys on the bed, one of which was gripping the other by his shirt.

Asch looked between the two. "Ummm.... Rhys!"

"No! No! Rhys is NOT needed!" Noi quickly said.

Asch placed the bowl down as Noi let go of Pierce's collar. Awkward silence filled the room as Asch quickly backed out. This was one time he could live with not knowing what was going on.

As soon as the door shut and they were certain Asch was out of earshot Noi tried to stand up. "Pierce, Pierce, I am SO not ready for marriage! I- I really can't-"

"Noi!" Pierce said forcefully. "We do *not* have to get married. I am not ready either." Pierce sighed after that, adjusting his collar.

Noi breathed a sigh of relief. "Oh... Th.. Thank the gods... N-no offense, Pierce, but-"

"It's fine." Pierce held his hand up. "Like I said, I am not ready either."

"And how will... they react?" Noi asked.

Pierce sighed. Neither of them were 'out of the closet' as humans said. "I am... I'm not sure."

Noi just nodded, trying to keep the worst possible scenario out of his head. A few more coughs racked his body, interrupting the silence. Thoughts raced in Noi's head.

"W-Well, what do we do now that we are courting?" Noi fell into a coughing fit after questioning Pierce, holding his chest and wincing in pain.

"I'm not sure, but I'd rather focus on getting you better first," Pierce responded while handing Noi the soup.

Noi nodded in agreement and whispered a "thank you" before he started eating his soup. Despite what Pierce had said, he couldn't just drop the whole situation. They were courting now, for goodness sake! And he hasn't courted anyone since literally ever! He didn't know what he was doing and had so many questions and worries that spiraled in his brain till his head started to ache.

Noi put his soup down on the bedside table before remaining still as a statue and as quiet as a ghost, occasionally stealing glances at his new 'boyfriend' while trying to ignore the sharp pain that mocked him in his frontal lobe and made the room appear to throb with it.

Noi eventually rubbed there, sighing. Gods, he felt both lucky and stressed. Pierce wished to court him back, a blessing or curse? What would happen to Pierce? He'd lose a lot of respect, wouldn't he? Maybe they shouldn't. Let Pierce have a happier life than be held back by him.

As if Pierce had read his thoughts, he reached over to squeeze Noi's hand. "Noi. I do wish to be with you. However, if you are not ready-"

"No! I-I think I am! Just... I've never courted someone before. I'll have to learn..."

"We'll have to learn," Pierce corrected. "I have not courted anyone either." Noi's eyes widened a bit as he stared at Pierce.

"Really? But... there were women who-"

"I did not want them," Pierce said, looking away.

"Why? They were pretty! I thought Leif would kill you one time, because he thought you were too lucky!"

"I had victory in battle. That was the only reason why."

"You didn't answer my question," Noi said, staring at Pierce.

“Noi. Do you really need me to say it?” Pierce asked while now appearing to be almost embarrassed for reasons Noi didn’t know.

“Well, y-yeah. I don’t know the answer and I wanna know,” Noi now seemed to also be getting nervous at the sudden change of Pierce’s demeanor.

Pierce went quiet for a moment. He sat with himself while Noi played mental gymnastics to not have a panic attack in this situation. He tried to look for anything that would hint at what Pierce was talking about, but it was like trying to read a foreign language. After too long of a moment, Pierce looked back at Noi and sighed before speaking.

“Because I…I was already into someone. I was into you.”

Noi needed to take a double take after what he just heard. And then a triple check for safe measure. Noi had only really understood that he had fallen for Pierce after they got on Earth. The women were waaay back from Daemos, Noi didn’t even think Pierce knew his name at the time, let alone had feelings for him.

“Oh.”

“Yeah, oh.”

“Why?”

“Why what?”

“What made you fall for me in the first place? I didn’t even think you knew my name at the time,” Noi queried with a tilted head.

"I... Noi, a lot of people knew who you were..." Pierce didn't say anything and Noi quickly figured out what had been said. Shit. So that had been Pierce's view of him before.

"So...?" Noi asked.

"I did not care. If Asch had chosen to save you you were obviously special in some way." Pierce paused. "Besides, a Daemos labeled kind and," Pierce took a small breath, as if preparing himself to say the word, "cute was abnormal and caught my attention."

"Really?" So Pierce had fallen for the thought of him?

"And then, when we did met-"

"Oh yeahhhh, you were-" Noi paused due to a coughing fit. "-Rhal's general! An-and you told some of the people in your command to stop bothering me!"

"Yes. And you surpassed my expectations."

"I DID?!" That sent Noi back into a coughing fit, and his stomach hurt, but he could not believe his ears. That was probably the first time he'd surpassed expectations in a good way! He pinched himself just to ensure he wasn't dreaming. Pain. This was real.

"It was not love at first sight," Pierce said, giving a small chuckle when Noi pinched himself. "Don't do that."

"So.. did you have a... Oh what did Princess Ava call it? A crush! So did you have a crush on me?" Noi asked.

"After a small bit. Yes."

Noi couldn't hold back his emotions. He started full on laughing at the idea of a young Pierce having a crush on him. The laughing soon turned into another coughing fit that made Noi hold his chest in pain. Despite the feeling, his smile remained on his face as he saw Pierce's flushed cheeks.

After he regained his bearings, he leaned into Pierce and gave him a light kiss on the cheek, both as a way to show his love and to embarrass him even more.

"I can't believe you thought so highly of me back then," Noi commented.

Pierce shrugged, obviously not caring very much. "When did you 'crush' on me?"

"Um, when we came to E-aurth..." Noi mumbled, cheeks still flushed. Pierce smiled at that. Was he content with having liked Noi so long and yet Noi's feelings were new?

"I g-guess I liked how nice you were here. Like, you became-"

"Softer?"

"In a way, yes. B-but I don't think that's a bad thing. It made you more charming to me," Noi placed his head on Pierce's chest.

Noi liked the way Pierce felt. His heartbeat, his breathing, his rough skin that felt nothing less than heaven for him. His arms slowly wrapped around Pierce's body in a loving hug before feeling arms wrap around himself as well. The smile planted on Noi's face seemed to almost be permanent in Pierce's arms.

And Pierce liked almost everything about Noi. His fluffy hair, his smile, his soft skin, the calluses that they had on their hands, the way Noi was so gentle and kind, his voice, just almost everything he could see about him.

"Huh." Who would've thought Noi would've been attracted to his kindness? Pierce began petting Noi's head again, as Noi let out a few more coughs. Noi's smile widened a bit as Pierce hugged him. So Noi enjoyed this? He made a note of that.

On an impulse, Noi sprung himself at Pierce and gave him a light kiss on the cheek, ultimately ambushing him. Before he could question his own actions, Pierce followed his example and did the same to Noi. They both stared at each other in slight befuddlement before closing the distance between their faces and kissed before pulling back with beaming faces.

Noi suddenly grew excited at the thought of Pierce. He grew excited at the thought of going out on dates to the movies like they did with Ava, or the park, or even sitting next to each other while holding hands. Hell, maybe he'd take Pierce out the second he got better. He wasn't feeling as bad as before, but knowing Pierce, he would be stuck in bed until he was 100% better. Maybe they could just have a date in the apartment. Yeah, maybe that would be nice. He would just have to learn what dating was like, easy. Easy-ish.

Pierce gave Noi a kiss on the forehead, just as excited for this, even if he didn't show it as much. But they would wait until Noi was better. Hopefully, that'd be soon, with Daemos's fast healing rates. It likely would be soon, actually. But he would not do anything until Noi was fully better, not wanting him to relapse. It had been scary back there.

And they'd both have to learn. Learn how to navigate dating struggles and all. But they could do it. They could. Pierce was certain of it.

"Hey. Do you think Ava would let us watch a movie right now?" Noi asked with a raspy voice but with hope in his eyes.

Pierce thought about it for a moment. It wasn't too much physical assertion but he was still deadly worries about Noi. He didn't want him to end up getting worse, especially since he was now getting better. After some more thought, Pierce sat himself up from the bed. "I can go ask her," Pierce stated while looking over his shoulder.

Noi nodded at that answer, optimistic that they could possibly have sort of a date now. Pierce walked out of the room before entering back at the apartment to see Leif sitting on the couch with a red-slap mark on his cheek, Asch sitting beside him staring at the tv, Rhys cleaning up the kitchen, and Ava standing by the dining table. When Ava noticed Pierce, she came over to his side with a smile. "How's Noi?" She questioned.

"Much better. Noi does wish to watch a movie, however."

Asch looked up. "And that means I get popcorn, right, Prisoner?!"

Rhys clasped his hands together. "And that would mean I get ice cream, right?"

"Noi also wants pizza," Pierce added.

Ava sighed, "Fine. I had a little money left over anyway... I'll order the pizza- You two, wait!- and you get Noi and ask him what movie he wants."

"He always picks lame movies th-" Leif was cut off by another slap from Asch.

"Leif, you do not get to speak." Rhys threw the paper towel he was using to clean in the trash. He shot Leif an icy glare.

Pierce could already tell another fight would likely break out. Ava had noticed too, because she had already gotten her phone out and was heading for her room. He quickly ducked into the palace and headed back for Noi's room.

Pierce walked back into Noi's room to see him still on the bed coughing a little bit into his hand. His eyes lit up at the sight of Pierce as he waved at him from the bed. Pierce smiled at the sight of him before speaking. "Ava said we can watch any movie you want and we are getting pizza."

Noi immediately sat straight up at the last word. "We can have pizz-!" Noi's ecstatic shouting was interrupted by his own coughing fit.

“Yes. Ava is using her phone to order it. Let me get you up.”

Pierce put his arm under Noi’s shoulders to hold him upwards while they walked back into the living room, seeming to be a bit high tension due to Leif. Noi didn’t notice this, he was too focused on the pizza. Oh, and the date. The slightly secretive stay-at-home date.

They both sat down on the far end of the couch, being closer than they were before the confessions. Noi took the remote and started searching through Flixynet on the tv before landing on a romcom. Asch immediately started booing at the movie choice before a stray water bottle got thrown at the back of his head by Ava, who was shushing him from behind.

"See?! He always chooses the lamest m-" Leif was bonked on the head too by Ava.

"Leif," Rhys whispered, "you should remember Noi is ill. We can humor him."

"You're just saying that because you like these movies."

"I do n-"

"Shh!" Ava rolled her eyes. Rhys turned his attention to the TV while Leif groaned.

A few minutes in, a knock sounded from the door. Ava paused the movie, and answered the door. "It's the pizza! Asch, Rhys, you guys can get your snacks now."

Pierce could have sworn that the two teleported onto the kitchen. Maybe they did. He would believe it. Noi smiled and gasped happily as Ava brought the pizza in. "I'll bring you a few pieces, Noi. I doubt Rhys and Asch are gonna eat any-
"

"I have ice cream. Pizza pales in comparison."

"You take that back!"

"You're both wrong. Popcorn is the best!"

"Boys..." Ava warned. Rhys shoved the popsicle into his mouth as Asch rolled his eyes and waited for his popcorn to stop popping. Leif snorted as Rhys came back over with the popsicle, never taking his mouth off of it. Ava came back with two slices for Noi, one for Pierce, one for Leif, and her own. She unpaused the movie as Noi bit in. Asch came back over, the popcorn still in the bag.

Noi quickly ate his slices, Pierce finished his own too, chuckling a bit when Noi grabbed the crust. Being sick had really made him hungry. Pierce slipped his hand under the blanket Ava had gotten for Noi, quickly finding his hand to hold it.

As Noi felt the touch of Pierce’s hand, he adjusted the blanket so both of them were covered as he grabbed Pierce’s hand. Noi did his best to keep his heart from racing as he continued to watch the movie. Asch and Leif whispered insults about the movie for a solid 5 minutes before shutting up in interest. The two of them were suddenly on the edge of their seats, as if they weren’t just mocking its existence.

Noi’s head slowly fell onto Pierce’s shoulder to avoid anyone noticing, and luckily no one did. Despite how it wasn’t exactly private or peaceful or anywhere fancy, Noi thought it was a really nice date. After all, holding hands was something he had on his courting bucket list. He was barely focused on the movie and more on the man sitting beside him, the man that he was now dating. Noi’s body continued to lean into Pierce’s while the romcom had played in front of them.

Pierce wrapped his arm around Noi's body, pulling him closer. Everyone was too focused on the movie, causing the perfect time. Pierce quickly scanned them all again, just to check.

Asch was still shoving popcorn down his throat, Leif and Ava were intently watching, and Rhys was still sucking on his popsicle. All safe. So he ran his hand through Noi's hair, who tried not to giggle.

Noi coughed to cover up his own laughter, taking a sigh of relief as he noticed it worked. The movie wasn't too bad, the main characters had reached a point of disagreement and split up when Noi focused on it again. Leif was noticeably in slight disarray at the movie as he stood up from the couch and exclaimed with raised eyebrows. "DUDE! What is he even doing?! Does he not think?!?"

Everyone collectively jumped back at the sudden outburst before Asch yanked his arm to sit him back down. "Shut up! It's not over," he whisper yelled back at Leif.

Noi allowed himself to laugh at that, as Rhys smacked Leif for obstructing his view. The movie REALLY didn't seem lame now. Noi could've sworn he heard Pierce laugh too.

"It's a simple misunderstanding, Leif," Rhys informed, before going back to his third popsicle of the night.

"Yeah but-" Asch shushed Leif again, as did Ava.

Pierce smiled a bit, before looking down at Noi. 'Gods, he's so beautiful.' Pierce squeezed Noi's hand's bit harder, looked around, and then planted a kiss on Noi's head. Oh, were they grateful everyone just assumed Noi's fever was causing the flushed face.

Ava looked over at Noi a few seconds after the kiss. "Noi, are you feeling alright? You look all red," she asked with light concern.

Noi let out a flustered laugh before speaking in a much higher pitch, "I'm okay. Don't worry about me."

Pierce laughed a slight bit at Noi's demeanor. Noi glared jokingly at Pierce as Ava looked away. He wanted to kiss Pierce again, but obviously couldn't say it, not yet. Instead, he took the other route and grabbed Pierce's hand underneath the blanket before kissing it. It wasn't much, but he wanted to return the favor. And for the feeling of his skin.

Pierce smiled at Noi. Gods, how did he get so lucky? Noi leaned in a bit. "Who's flustered now?" Pierce playfully tapped Noi on the forehead, making Noi suppress a laugh.

Asch glared at them for a split second, before returning his attention to the TV, not noticing Leif sneaking some of his popcorn. Noi suppressed another laugh of relief as Pierce stared at Asch for a bit. "We nearly got caught..." Noi whispered. Damn. How were they supposed to keep this a secret?

Noi figured that he would have to wait for the movie to finish before going back into his room with Pierce before they could show their affection towards each other, which saddened him a little bit. Then again, he also wasn't ready to reveal his relationship with the group and wasn't sure how Pierce would even feel as well. He grew a bit impatient as the movie seemed to drone on for eternity, even though there were only 30 minutes left of the film.

Noi released a restless sigh before a coughing fit quickly came after due to the harshness of his throat. He leaned back onto the couch and looked between the clock and the tv, hoping time would pass faster. The movie wasn't boring or anything, but the thought of Pierce was something that simply interested him more. He was more focused on his own romance than the romance of two people on a screen.

Soon enough, the movie ended, Ava wiping away a tear. "So beautiful..." Rhys nodded in response, before quickly swallowing the rest of his popsicle.

"Yeah, I guess." Leif tried to act as if he hadn't been interested, though he was failing miserably. Asch shrugged too.

Noi feigned a coughing fit, which quickly turned into a real one. Pierce seemed to catch the message. "I shall escort Noi to his room." He effortlessly picked Noi up, going through the red markered wall and entering the castle.

Noi kept an eye over Pierce's shoulder and waited till he was sure no one was following. Once he was certain, he quickly gave Pierce a peck on the lips. He had a look of momentary shock from the small kiss until he pulled in Noi for a longer one. Noi had suddenly pulled back to let out a coughing fit that made his voice low and raspy. "I'm glad we got to watch a movie together. It-it was almost like a date."

Pierce nodded and showed a small smile. "Yes," he stated back to Noi while placing him on the bed and lying down beside him.

"Once I get better, we can go on a real date." Noi sunk into his bed as Pierce idly played with his salmon hair.

"I'll…I'll take you somewhere nice. Like a cafe, or the park, or…wherever humans court."

Pierce continued nodding at Noi's heartfelt yet slight fever driven ramble. But he did look forward to Noi getting better, not just for the dates but so he could see him healthy again. Noi wrapped his arms tightly around Pierce's chest, listening to his heartbeat.

Noi smiled as Pierce continued playing with his hair, Pierce making sure to be nowhere near the horns. Pierce's head was a bit unsure, wanting to kiss Noi again, but also wanting Noi to stay where he was. He didn't know what he wanted, so he idly played with Noi's hair.

Noi fiddled a bit with Pierce's shirt, seeming content. He loved this. He could stay here all day long if he needed. Pierce kept playing with his hair, still trying to decide.

However, Noi made the choice for him, leaning up to gently kiss him once again. Still as gentle as ever, before pulling away and cuddling him tighter. "Can you stay with me… Just in case my sickness gets worse?" Noi asked, ~~clearly not using that as an excuse to cuddle again~~.

"Yes." Pierce began petting his head again, before kissing his forehead.

"G'night, Pierce…. I love you…" Noi mumbled, closing his eyes.

"Yes." Pierce paused, before he said softly, "I love you too." And that was all Noi needed to hear, before he fell asleep, no nightmares this time.

Notes:

Hi y'all. The lovely Hypnoi helped me with this, please go read his fics they're amazing :D

Yoooo, it's Hypnoi. This took a while to edit but I'm glad to have been able to do this fic with Myst and I heavily suggest reading their fics as well, they are awesome and yeah, thanks for reading!

Close (#)